

I'd would like to welcome everyone to
the Beginners "Big Book" Step Meeting
Tonight we will take steps 1, 2 and 3

My name is _____ and I'm a
recovered alcoholic.

My sobriety date is _____ and for
that I am truly grateful.

(Introduce 2nd reader _____)

Let's take a moment of silence and I will open
this meeting with the Set Aside Prayer.

I will ask God to helps us set aside everything
we think we know so we may have an open
mind and a new experience

“God, Please help us set aside everything we think we know about ourself, the 12 Steps, the Big Book, the meetings, our alcoholic illness, and you God, so we may have an open mind and a new experience with all these things. Please let us see the truth.”

Amen

Essentials of Recovery - Three Ingredients

Let's go to 2nd page after page 181 in the guide books!



page 570 3rd paragraph

We find that no one need have difficulty with the spirituality of the program. Willingness, honesty and open mindedness are the essentials of recovery. But these are indispensable.



Let's go to page 18, paragraph 4



page 18, paragraph 4

But the ex-problem drinker who has found this solution, who is properly armed with facts about himself, can generally win the **entire confidence of another alcoholic in a few hours**. Until such an understanding is reached, little or nothing can be accomplished.

That the man who is making the approach has had the same difficulty, that he obviously knows what he is talking about, that his whole deportment shouts at the new prospect that he is a man with a real answer, that he has no attitude of Holier Than Thou, nothing whatever except the sincere desire to be helpful; that there are no fees to pay, no axes to grind, no people to please, no lectures to be endured - these are the conditions we have found most effective.

After such an approach many take up their beds and walk again. None of us makes a sole vocation of this work, nor do we think its effectiveness would be increased if we did.

We feel that elimination of our drinking is but a beginning.

A much more important demonstration of our principles lies before us in our respective homes, occupations and affairs.

All of us spend much of our spare time in the sort of effort which we are going to describe. A few are fortunate enough to be so situated that they can give nearly all their time to the work.



When one alcoholic talks to another alcoholic, we can win their ENTIRE confidence in a few hours!

The start of Alcoholics Anonymous, a brief history

A seemingly unplanned meeting in Akron, Ohio in 1935 between two men, Dr Bob Smith and Bill Wilson, both of whom were termed "hopeless" alcoholics, began a program of recovery that has helped millions find sobriety and serenity.

Bill Wilson was fighting his own battle against drinking, he had already learned from the Oxford Group that helping other alcoholics was the key to maintaining his own sobriety, the principle that would later become step twelve in the Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous.

The effect the meeting had on Dr. Bob was immediate, as he tells it in his own words and soon he too put down the bottle, June 10, 1935.

One alcoholic talking to another alcoholic, the bond formed between these two men would

grow into a movement that would literally save the lives of millions.

Starting in an upstairs room at Dr. Bob's home at in Akron, the two men began helping alcoholics one person at a time.

Here's a quote from Dr Bob's story in the Big Book, "The Doctor's Nightmare"

Let's go to page 180 paragraph 2 !

The question which might naturally come into your mind would be: "what did the man do or say that was different from what others had done or said?"

It must be remembered that I had read a great deal and talked to everyone who knew, or thought they knew, anything about the subject of alcoholism.

This man was a man who had experienced many years of frightful drinking, who had had most all the drunkard's experience known to man, but who had been cured by the very means I had been trying to employ, that is to say, the spiritual approach.

He gave me information about the subject of alcoholism which was undoubtedly helpful.

Of far more importance was the fact that he was the first living human with whom I had ever talked, who knew what he was talking about in regard to alcoholism from actual experience.

In other words, he talked my language.

He knew all the answers, and certainly not because he had picked them up in his reading. It is a most wonderful blessing to be relieved of the terrible curse with which I was afflicted.

My health is good and I have regained my self-respect and the respect of my colleagues. My home life is ideal and my business is as good as can be expected in these uncertain times.

I spend a great deal of time passing on what I learned to others who want and need it badly.

I do it for four reasons:

1. Sense of duty.
2. It is a pleasure
3. Because in so doing I am paying my debt to the man who took time to pass it on to me.
4. Because every time I do it I take out a little more insurance for myself against a possible slip

end quote

We are now going to ASK a series of questions for steps 1, 2, and 3 based on quotes from the Big Book

Let's go to page 90, 1st paragraph



Page 90 - 1st paragraph

When you discover a prospect for Alcoholics Anonymous, find out all you can about him. If he does not want to stop drinking, don't waste time trying to persuade him.



Let's go to page 58, 2nd paragraph



Page 58 - 2nd paragraph

If you have decided you want what we have and are willing to go to any length to get it—then you are ready to take certain steps.



are you ready to take certain steps?

Let's go to page 28, 2nd paragraph



Page 28 - 2nd paragraph

We, in our turn, sought the same escape with all the desperation of drowning men.



Do want the same escape with all the desperation of a drowning man?

Do you want to quit for good and are you willing to go to any extreme to do so?

Let's go to page 90, 3rd paragraph, 8 lines down



Let's go to page 90, 3rd paragraph, 8 lines down

If he says yes, then his attention should be drawn to you as a person who has recovered.



Let's read step 1 on page 59



Page 59

Step 1

We admitted we were powerless over alcohol—that our lives had become unmanageable



Step 1 is your foundation to your sobriety.

The instructions for taking the 12 steps are in the first 103 pages of the Big Book.

The Big Book Authors devote the 1st - 43 pages on step 1; add 8 pages from the “The Doctors Opinion,” and that makes it 51 pages !

The Big Book Authors use half of the Big Book to make one point, you have no power!
NO HUMAN POWER CAN KEEP US SOBER!

Let's read from "The Doctor's Opinion" -
Roman numeral XXVI - 4th paragraph

Doctor Silkworth - The Little Doctor Who
Loved Drunks

Men and women drink essentially because they like the affect produced by alcohol.

Is this your experience?

The sensation is so elusive that, while they admit it is injurious,

Is it injurious to you?

they cannot after a time differentiate the true from the false. To them, their alcoholic life seems the only normal one.

They are restless, irritable and discontented, unless they can again experience the sense of ease and comfort which comes at once by taking a few drinks-drinks which they see others taking with impunity.

After they have succumbed to the desire again, as so many people do,

Is this your experience?

and the phenomenon of craving develops, they pass through the well-known stages of a spree, emerging remorseful, with a firm resolution not to drink again.

Is this your experience?

This is repeated over and over,

Is this your experience?

and unless this person can experience an entire psychic change there is very little hope of his recovery.

NOTE: succumbed to the desire again
MEANS you are thinking about it - DESIRE IS
THE MENTAL OBSESSION

NOTE: the phenomenon of craving develops
is PHYSICAL --- the phenomenon of craving
develops WHEN YOU PUT ALCOHOL IN YOU
BODY

The word psychic means "MIND"

Let's go to page 27, 1st paragraph

The doctor that is talking now is Dr Carl Jung
who was a Swiss psychiatrist, and the founder
of analytical psychology.

The man he is talking to is Roland Hazard,
who found sobriety in the Oxford group in
1933.

Ideas, emotions, and attitudes which were once the guiding forces of the lives of these men are suddenly cast to one side, and a completely new set of conceptions and motives begin to dominate them.

In fact, I have been trying to produce some such emotional rearrangement within you.

With many individuals the methods which I employed are successful, but I have never been successful with an alcoholic of your description.”

Upon hearing this, our friend was somewhat relieved, for he reflected that, after all, he was a good church member.

This hope, however, was destroyed by the doctor's telling him that while his religious convictions were very good, in his case they did not spell the necessary vital spiritual experience.



Let's go to page 20, 5th paragraph



page 20, 5th paragraph

Moderate drinkers have little trouble in giving up liquor entirely if they have good reason for it. They can take it or leave it alone.

Then we have a certain type of hard drinker. He may have the habit badly enough to gradually impair him physically and mentally. It may cause him to die a few years before his time.

If a sufficiently strong reason—ill health, falling in love, change of environment, or the warning of a doctor—becomes operative, this man can also stop or moderate, although he may find it difficult and troublesome and may even need medical attention.



Moderate drinkers have little trouble in giving up liquor entirely if they have good reason for it.

**Can you give up liquor entirely if
you have good reason too?**

They can take it or leave it alone.

Can take it or leave it alone?

Then we have a certain type of hard drinker. He may have the habit badly enough to gradually impair him physically and mentally. It may cause him to die a few years before his time.

If a sufficiently strong reason—ill health,

**Has being sick ever caused
you to stop for good ?**

falling in love,

**Can you stop for the sake
of your spouse, family, friends?**

change of environment,

Has moving away worked for you?

or the warning of a doctor—

**Has your doctor's advice
to stop ever worked for you?**

this man can also stop or moderate,

Is this you?

Let's go to page 21, 1st paragraph



page 21, 1st paragraph

But what about the real alcoholic?

He may start off as a moderate drinker; he may or may not become a continuous hard drinker; but at some stage of his drinking career he begins to lose all control of his liquor consumption, once he starts to drink.



Is this your experience?

Let's go to page 24, 1st paragraph

Notice the italic writing?

This means it is VERY IMPORTANT

The fact is that most alcoholics, for some reason yet obscure, have lost the power of choice in drink.

Is this your experience?

Our so-called will power becomes practically nonexistent.

Is this your experience?

We are unable, at certain times, to bring into our consciousness with sufficient force the memory of the suffering and humiliation of even a week or a month ago.

Is this your experience?

We are without defense against the first drink.

Is this your experience?

Let's go to page 30, 1st paragraph



page 30, 1st paragraph

MOST OF US have been unwilling to admit we were real alcoholics.

No person likes to think he is bodily and mentally different from his fellows.

Therefore, it is not surprising that our drinking careers have been characterized by countless vain attempts to prove we could drink like other people.

The idea that somehow, someday he will control and enjoy his drinking is the great obsession of every abnormal drinker.

The persistence of this illusion is astonishing. Many pursue it into the gates of insanity or death.



Therefore, it is not surprising that our drinking careers have been characterized by countless vain attempts to prove we could drink like other people.

Is this your experience?

The idea that somehow, someday he will control and enjoy his drinking is the great obsession of every abnormal drinker.

Is this your experience?

Let's go to page 30, 3rd paragraph



page 30, 3rd paragraph

We alcoholics are men and women who have lost the ability to control our drinking. We know that no real alcoholic ever recovers control.

All of us felt at times that we were regaining control, but such intervals—usually brief—were inevitably followed by still less control, which led in time to pitiful and incomprehensible demoralization.

We are convinced to a man that alcoholics of our type are in the grip of a progressive illness. Over any considerable period we get worse, never better.



We alcoholics are men and women who have lost the ability to control our drinking. We know that no real alcoholic ever recovers control.

Is this your experience?

All of us felt at times that we were regaining control, but such intervals—usually brief—were inevitably followed by still less control, which led in time to pitiful and incomprehensible demoralization.

Is this your experience?

We are convinced to a man that alcoholics of our type are in the grip of a progressive illness. Over any considerable period we get worse, never better.

Is this your experience?

Let's go to page 44, 1st paragraph



page 44, 1st paragraph

IN THE PRECEDING chapters you have learned something of alcoholism.

We hope we have made clear the distinction between the alcoholic and the non-alcoholic.

If, when you honestly want to, you find you cannot quit entirely, or if when drinking, you have little control over the amount you take, you are probably alcoholic.

If that be the case, you may be suffering from an illness which only a spiritual experience will conquer.



IN THE PRECEDING chapters you have learned something of alcoholism.

We hope we have made clear the distinction between the alcoholic and the non-alcoholic.

If, when you honestly want to, you find you cannot quit entirely, or if when drinking, you have little control over the amount you take, you are probably alcoholic.

Is this you?

If that be the case, you may be suffering from an illness which only a spiritual experience will conquer.

Let's go to page 22, 1st paragraph



page 22, 1st paragraph

This is by no means a comprehensive picture of the true alcoholic, as our behavior patterns vary. But this description should identify him roughly.



Does it ?

Let's go to page 30, 2nd paragraph



page 30, 2nd paragraph

We learned that we had to fully concede to our innermost selves that we were alcoholics.

This is the first step in recovery.

The delusion that we are like other people, or presently may be, has to be smashed.



In order to smash the delusion that you're not alcoholic, we are going to ask each of you to answer a simple question,

“Are you ready to concede to your innermost self that you are powerless over alcohol?

are you an alcoholic?

If you say **YES** to this question, what you are agreeing too is that you have **NO POWER** over mental obsession and **YOU have EXPERIENCED** the phenomenon of craving and your life is unmanageable.

Ask yourself this question:

“Are you WILLING to concede to your innermost self that you have NO POWER and you need a NEW MANAGER?

If you are still clinging to the IDEA that you have power, there is no room for Step 2

Let's look at step 2.....

Step 2

Came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

For those who are ready to take the First Step, please stand, and answer one at a time "yes" or "no"

This is the First Step question:

"Do you fully concede to your innermost self that you are alcoholic"?

Thank you, according to the Big Book authors, those who have answered "yes" to this question have taken Step 1

There is a solution !

Let's go to page 25, 3rd paragraph



page 25, 3rd paragraph

If you are as seriously alcoholic as we were, we believe there is no middle-of-the-road solution.

We were in a position where life was becoming impossible, and if we had passed into the region from which there is no return through human aid, we had but two alternatives:

One was to go on to the bitter end, blotting out the consciousness of our intolerable situation as best we could; and the other, to accept spiritual help.

This we did because we honestly wanted to, and were willing to make the effort.



Let's read step 2 on page 59



Step 2

Came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.



Let's go to page 45, 1st paragraph



page 45, 1st paragraph

Lack of power, that was our dilemma. We had to find a power by which we could live, and it had to be a *Power greater than ourselves*.

Obviously.

But where and how were we to find this Power? Well, that's exactly what this book is about. Its main object is to enable you to find a Power greater than yourself which will solve your problem.



Is lack of power your dilemma?

The Big Book authors clearly state that it is impossible to define God.

We have to stop trying to comprehend God with our minds and start accepting God with our hearts.

On page 46 Paragraph 2 we are asked to find a Higher Power of our own understanding



page 46 - Paragraph 2

“Much to our relief, we discovered we did not need to consider another’s conception of God.

Our own conception, however, inadequate, was sufficient to make the approach and to effect a contact with Him.

As soon as we **admitted the possible existence** of a Creative Intelligence, a Spirit of the Universe underlying the totality of things, we began to be **possessed of a new sense of power and direction**, provided we took other simple steps.

We found that God does not make too hard terms with those who seek Him.

To us, the Realm of Spirit is broad, roomy, all inclusive; never exclusive or forbidding to those who earnestly seek. It is open, we believe to all men.”



As soon as we **admitted the possible existence** of a Creative Intelligence, a Spirit of the Universe underlying the totality of things, we began to be **possessed of a new sense of power and direction**, provided we took other simple steps.

Many different names for a **Power Greater than ourselves** are used in this book including

“Creative Intelligence,
“Universal Mind,”
“Spirit of the Universe,”
“Creator,”
“Great Reality”
‘Father of Light”

The Big Book Authors often use the word **“God”** for convenience rather than for any religious purpose. If you choose to, substitute the word “God” for your own concept of a Higher Power **OF YOUR UNDERSTANDING.**

Let's go to page 13, 4th paragraph, Bill's story



page 13, 4th paragraph

I was to test my thinking by the new God-consciousness within. Common sense would thus become uncommon sense.

I was to sit quietly when in doubt, asking only for direction and strength to meet my problems as He would have me.

Never was I to pray for myself, except as my requests bore on my usefulness to others.

Then only might I expect to receive. But that would be in great measure.

My friend promised when these things were done I would enter upon a new relationship with my Creator; that I would have the elements of a way of living which answered all my problems.

Belief in the power of God, plus enough willingness, honesty and humility to establish and maintain the new order of things, were the essential requirements.

Simple, but not easy; a price had to be paid.

It meant destruction of self-centeredness.

I must turn in all things to the Father of Light who presides over us all.



Let's go to page 55, 2nd paragraph



page 55, 2nd paragraph

Actually we were fooling ourselves, for deep down in every man, woman, and child, is the fundamental idea of God. It may be obscured by calamity, by pomp, by worship of other things, but in some form or other it is there.

For faith in a Power greater than ourselves, and miraculous demonstrations of that power in human lives, are facts as old as man himself. We finally saw that faith in some kind of God was a part of our make-up, just as much as the feeling we have for a friend.

Sometimes we had to search fearlessly, but He was there. He was as much a fact as we were. We found the Great Reality deep down within us. In the last analysis it is only there that He may be found. It was so with us.



WHERE AND HOW TO FIND the fundamental idea of God

WHERE ---

Actually we were fooling ourselves, for deep down in every man, woman, and child, is the fundamental idea of God.

We finally saw that faith in some kind of God was a part of our make-up, just as much as the feeling we have for a friend.

HOW ---

Sometimes we had to search fearlessly, but He was there. He was as much a fact as we were.

Let's go to page 57, 2nd paragraph



page 57, 2nd paragraph

Some of us grow into it more slowly.

But He has come to all who have
honestly sought Him.

When we drew near to Him He disclosed
Himself to us!



Let's go to page 47, 2nd paragraph



page 47, 2nd paragraph

We needed to ask ourselves but one short question. "Do I now believe, or am I even willing to believe, that there is a Power greater than myself?"

As soon as a man can say that he does believe, or is willing to believe, we emphatically assure him that he is on his way.

It has been repeatedly proven among us that upon this simple cornerstone a wonderfully effective spiritual structure can be built.



For those who are ready to take the 2nd Step,
please stand, and answer one at a time

“yes” or “no”

This is the Second Step question:

**“Do you now believe, or are you even
willing to believe, that there is a
Power greater than ourselves”?**

Thank you, according to the Big Book
authors, those who have answered “yes” to
this question have taken Step Two

Let's read step 3 on page 59



Step 3

Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as *we understood Him*



We turn over our thinking and actions by ASKING.....Is it selfish or not?

Operating on self will keeps us separated from God and our fellows.

God is our NEW manager, we turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as *we understand Him*

Let's go to page 60, 2nd paragraph

(a) That we were alcoholic and could not manage our own lives.

Is this you?

(b) That probably no human power could have relieved our alcoholism.

Are you beyond human aid?

(c) That God could and would if He were sought.

Will you trust and relying upon God?

Are you convinced of the A, B, C's?

Let's go to page 68, 2nd paragraph



page 68, 2nd paragraph

Perhaps there is a better way - we think so.

For we are now on a different basis; the basis of trusting and relying upon God.

We trust infinite God rather than our finite selves.

We are in the world to play the role He assigns.

Just to the extent that we do as we think He would have us, and humbly rely on Him, does He enable us to match calamity with serenity.



Above everything, we alcoholics must be rid of selfishness. we must, or it kills us!

God makes that possible.

And there often seems no way of entirely getting rid of self without **His aid**. Many of us had moral and philosophical convictions galore, but we could not live up to them even though we would have liked to.

Neither could we reduce our self-centeredness much by wishing or trying on our own power. **We had to have God's help."**



The ROOT OF YOUR TROUBLES is
Selfishness—self-centeredness! We are you
driven by a hundred forms of fear, **self-
delusion**, self-seeking, and self-pity

Let's go to page 62, 3rd paragraph



page 62, 3rd paragraph

This is the how and the why of it.
First of all, we had to quit playing God.
It didn't work. Next, we decided that hereafter
in this drama of life, God was going to be our
Director.

He is the Principal; we are His agents.
He is the Father, and we are His children.
Most Good ideas are simple, and this concept
was the keystone of the new and triumphant
arch through which we passed to freedom.



First of all, we had to quit playing God

Are you ready to quit playing God?

Let's go to page 63, 2nd paragraph



page 63, 2nd paragraph

We were now at Step Three. Many of us said to our Maker, *as we understood Him*:

“God, I offer myself to Thee—to build with me and to do with me as Thou wilt.

Relieve me of the bondage of self, that I may better do Thy will.

Take away my difficulties, that victory over them may bear witness to those I would help of Thy Power, Thy Love, and Thy Way of life.

May I do Thy will always!”

We thought well before taking this step making sure we were ready; that we could at last abandon ourselves utterly to Him.



Let's go to page 63, 3rd paragraph



page 63, 3rd paragraph

We found it very desirable to take this spiritual step with an understanding person, such as our wife, best friend, or spiritual adviser.

But it is better to meet God alone than with one who might misunderstand.

The wording was, of course, quite optional so long as we expressed the idea, voicing it without reservation.

This was only a beginning, though if honestly and humbly made, an effect, sometimes a very great one, was felt at once.



We thought well before taking this step making sure we were ready; that we could at last abandon ourselves utterly to Him.

Are you ready?

Let's go to page 63, 2nd paragraph

For those who are ready to take the 3rd Step, please stand and we will say this prayer together and then we will have taken step three

“God, I offer myself to Thee—to build with me and to do with me as Thou wilt.

Relieve me of the bondage of self, that I may better do Thy will.

Take away my difficulties, that victory over them may bear witness to those I would help of Thy Power, Thy Love, and Thy Way of life. May I do Thy will always!”

We take the Fourth Step
immediately after the Third Step

Let's go to page 63, 4th paragraph



page 63, 4th paragraph

“Next we launched out on a course of vigorous action, the first step of which is a personal housecleaning, which many of us had never attempted.

Though our decision was a vital and crucial step, it could have little permanent effect unless at once followed by a strenuous effort to face, and to rid of, the things in ourselves which had been blocking us.

Our liquor was but a symptom.

So we had to get down to causes and conditions.”



Our decision (step 3) was a vital and crucial step, but it could have little permanent effect unless at once followed by step 4

So we get down to causes and conditions

A cause is that will produces a result

A condition is a state of mind

Keep in mind that it is not necessary, for newcomers to talk about every resentment or selfish act, or each person he or she has ever lied to or harmed for the inventory to be thorough.

The objective is to get to “causes and conditions”.

Sometimes it takes only a few incidents to make clear which short-comings have kept the newcomer blocked from an intimate, two-way relationship with the “One who has all power.”

We have taken steps 1, 2 and 3, we have surrendered to alcohol and to the will of God.

**ARE THERE ANY QUESTIONS
OR COMMENTS?**

Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism.

Our primary purpose is to stay sober and help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety.

This concludes our presentation of the Steps 1, 2, and 3.

Next week we will take steps 4, 5, 6, and 7.

Any men or women who want to take the 12 steps please connect with a sharing partner.

A sharing partner can work with you on a 1 to 1 basis so you can take all 12 steps!

Who want's a sharing partner?

Remember, this Group takes all 12 steps every month at the group level. Starting with steps 1, 2 and 3 on the first Sunday of EVERY month.

Will the sharing partners who want work with others please stand and INTRODUCE YOURSELF and remain STANDING

Any men or women who want to take the 12 steps please see the sharing partners after the MEETING CLOSES WITH THE LORD'S PRAYER.

In honor of our AA pioneers, and in the old tradition, we will simply stand WITHOUT HOLDING HANDS, and close this meeting with the Lord's Prayer